

passed by the Senate and sent to the President for his approval without delay.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleagues, Senators NICKLES and LEAHY in getting through the Senate H.R. 924, the Victim Allocation Clarification Act. This is an important issue for victims and their families of the Murrah Federal Building bombing. Clearly, we would not have been able to get this through unless there was widespread support for clarifying congressional intent with respect to the rights of victims and their families.

Although the Victims Rights and Resolution Act of 1990 provided that victims have the right to be present at all public court proceedings, it conditioned that on a court determination that the testimony by the victim would not be materially affected if the victim heard other testimony at the trial. Recent courts decisions have held that victims cannot attend the trial and submit a victim's impact statement. H.R. 924 clarifies congressional intent by allowing the victim and their family to both attend the trial and submit a statement during the sentencing phase.

I believe this language has reached a delicate balance between protecting the rights of the victims while maintaining the constitutional protections of the defendant. As noted by Senator NICKLES, it is critical that we pass H.R. 924 before the trial in the Oklahoma City bombing case begins on March 31. I appreciate the efforts of all involved in getting through the Senate and House expeditiously.

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be deemed read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 924) was deemed read a third time and passed.

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. LEAHY. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I thank my friend and colleague, Senator LEAHY from Vermont. We have done something rather unusual. We worked together in a very bipartisan fashion to do some good work, and we did it very quickly. It is not often that Congress passes legislation this quickly, and we did so.

Also, I want to thank Senator DASCHLE and Senator LOTT because we wanted to expedite this. We would like to get it to the President before he leaves the country today. This trial happens to start on the 31st of this month.

I might mention that this is the third piece of legislation that we have passed that deals directly, or has had some impact, I guess, as a result of the Oklahoma City bombing. Last Congress, we passed legislation dealing with habeas corpus reform, one of the most significant improvements, I think, in our statutes dealing with criminal law in a long time. We wanted to have an end to endless appeals. I think the Oklahoma City tragedy gave us great momentum to make that happen. I remember several of the victims coming to testify, urging Congress to enact a crime bill, but also urging Congress to enact habeas reform because they wanted to see justice soon rather than later.

We also passed legislation to allow closed-circuit TV so victims would not have to go all the way to Denver. I was disappointed the decision was made that the trial would be held in Denver. Originally, the judge said the people would have to attend to witness the trial. This trial could last for months. We passed legislation basically mandating that closed-circuit TV would be allowed in this case and, hopefully, other cases. Hopefully, we will not have other cases, but if we have another case that might be identical to this, the victims and their families would not have to travel several hundred miles just to be able to witness the trial.

Finally, we passed this legislation, this important legislation, to allow victims and their families to be able to witness a trial and also, if they desire, to be able to testify during the sentencing phase. This would not have happened if we did not have bipartisan support.

Again, I thank my colleagues for making it happen. I am delighted. On behalf of hundreds of Oklahoma City families who are directly impacted, we say thank you to both our colleagues in the House and the Senate for passing this legislation today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM NEEDED

Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the floor of the U.S. Senate for the first time. I do so with mixed emotions. Following in the great tradition of this seat once held by such notables as Dick Russell and Sam Nunn, I am poignantly aware that freshman Senators should be seen and not heard. However, there is an issue building in this country which I feel obligated to comment on and regarding which I can no longer remain silent. This is the issue of reforming the way we finance our political campaigns at the Federal level, particularly seats in the U.S. Congress, and especially seats in the U.S. Senate.

There are many other issues facing our Nation to which we are all com-

pelled to pay time and attention: issues such as eliminating the Federal deficit, taking care of those who have served this Nation in the Armed Forces, caring for our elderly and our young, improving our environment, and recommitting our educational system to excellence. However, as important as these issues are, in my opinion, they are all secondary to the basic issue before us—the need to recapture the public's faith in our democratic processes and our democratic institutions. Without that faith, all of these other endeavors will be undermined.

Confucius, the noted Chinese sage, once wrote that there were three things that make up a great nation: First, a strong defense; second a vigorous economy; and third, the faith of people in their government. Confucius noted that a great nation might do without a strong defense, or that a great nation might be able to do without a vigorous economy, but, Confucius noted that a great nation could not remain great without the faith of the people in their government.

Mr. President, I am committed to supporting programs and plans for a strong defense for our Nation. I serve on the Senate Armed Services Committee with great pride and a sense of awesome responsibility in this regard. I also am committed to a vigorous economy, and to upgrading the quality of education in America, in particular to creating hope for all of our qualified youngsters that they will have an opportunity to go to college or to receive vocational training. In furtherance of this objective, I am a cosponsor of S. 12, a program designed to provide a \$1,500 tax credit and a \$10,000 tax deduction to working families so they can see their children achieve the American dream. But I am especially committed to doing those things which we need to do to enhance the faith of people in this country in their own Government by cleaning up the campaign finance mess.

When I first came to Washington as a young college student in the fall of 1963, I was inspired by President Kennedy to get involved in public service. I especially enjoyed meeting and learning from Members of the Senate. I can vividly recall personal meetings with Senators Russell and Talmadge from Georgia, and a young Senator from West Virginia named ROBERT C. BYRD. In those days, my heart was stirred to devote my life to politics.

Many of us in this Chamber today got our first taste of politics in the early sixties. For me, that introduction was a positive one.

However, when I was sworn in here on the Senate floor on January 7 of this year, I could not help but think how differently our current leaders and our current institutions are perceived by today's public, especially our young people. I do not believe that our leaders or our institutions are of lesser caliber than those of my youth, but something has obviously gone wrong. We in public

office today face a hostile and cynical public, quite willing to take the worst possible reports about us and believe them instantly. One of the reasons for this attitude toward our public officials, I think, is the constant money chase that U.S. House and U.S. Senate campaigns have become. Additionally, when this money is spent on 30-second character assassination ads which have become the staple of American politics, can we expect our public to truly speak highly of us?

I believe the single most important step we can take in the Congress this year in restoring public confidence and faith in our democracy is to enact meaningful campaign finance reform. This is not a problem for Democrats. This is not a problem for Republicans. It is a problem for us all. We must act together in a bipartisan manner to clean up a system which has gotten completely out of control and which undermines both the operation and reputation of our entire national Government.

Throughout my early days in this body, I and all of my colleagues have been under a constant barrage of reports of campaign financing improprieties in the 1996 elections. I feel very strongly that our current campaign system has become a national embarrassment.

Will Rogers said back in the 1930's that, "Politics has got so expensive that it takes lots of money to even get beat with." How true that is, especially today. In the 1960's a Georgia politician remarked, "The only thing tainted about political money is that it 'taint mine and 'taint enough."

The American public isn't laughing anymore. They are demanding a change in the attitudes of politicians on the question of campaign fundraising. We currently have a political system which is drowning in money and rife with real and potential conflicts of interest. Simply stated, we have too many dollars chasing and being chased by too many politicians too much of the time.

This unseemly money chase has taken its toll in terms of public confidence. The election year of 1996 witnessed both a record high in the amount of money spent in pursuit of Federal office—a staggering \$800 million—and the second worst voter turnout in American history! In 1996, 10 million fewer voters went to the polls to cast their ballots in that Presidential year than went to the polls 2 years earlier. What's wrong with this picture? Some \$220 million was spent on Senate races alone. In my Senate race in Georgia, I raised and spent some \$3.5 million, but was outspent by a multimillionaire who spent over \$10 million running for the Senate seat—\$7 million of which was his own money. Is it any wonder that more and more of our citizens see that there is a for sale sign on more and more public offices in America? If we don't bring about reform of this process, limit expendi-

tures, and establish rules for everyone to play by, the average citizen will have less and less chance to serve in this body or run for public office. Senator DASCHLE predicts that at the current pace of the money chase, in only 29 years the average Senate race will cost \$143 million.

This is insanity.

We cannot allow the Congress of the United States, especially the U.S. Senate, to become a millionaires' club dominated by the rich and run by the powerful special interests. This system continues to take its toll on this body as the money chase continues. The exodus of distinguished, veteran legislators who have voluntarily departed from the U.S. Senate in the last 2 years is at an historic level. Even in my first 2 months in the Senate, I have seen noted Republican and Democratic legislators like DAN COATS, JOHN GLENN, and WENDELL FORD announce their retirement from this body partially because of the frustration of spending the next 2 years doing nothing but raising money for their upcoming campaign. Senator FORD spoke the thoughts of many when he said on his retirement:

The job of being a U.S. Senator today has unfortunately become a job of raising money to be reelected instead of a job doing the people's business. Traveling to New York, California, Texas, or basically any State in the country, weekend after weekend for the next 2 years is what candidates must do if they hope to raise the money necessary to compete in a Senatorial election. Democracy as we know it will be lost if we continue to allow government to become one bought by the highest bidder, for the highest bidder. Candidates will simply become bit players and pawns in a campaign managed and manipulated by paid consultants and hired guns.

The essential first step in repairing the current system is passage this year of S. 25, the bipartisan McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform bill. I am very proud to be an original cosponsor of this proposal. It was the very first piece of legislation I attached my name to as a U.S. Senator. Briefly outlined, the bill would: ban soft money contributions to national political parties; ban contributions by political action committees to Federal candidates; establish voluntary spending limits, including limits on personal spending, and require that at least 60 percent of funds be raised from home State individuals for Senate candidates; provide candidates who abide by these spending limits with limited free and discounted television time and a discount on postage rates; require greater disclosure of independent expenditures; and prohibit contributions from those who are ineligible to vote in Federal elections, including non-American citizens.

Mr. President, the best endorsement I can think of for this measure is that had McCain-Feingold been in effect for the 1996 elections, we would not now need to divert our attention away from the many serious problems facing our country in order to devote time and energy toward the investigation of cam-

paign finance abuses. I serve on the Governmental Affairs Committee which will be conducting this investigation. I fully support the purposes for which this investigation is intended, but I'm saddened it has to be undertaken in the first place. I only hope that this effort will result in meaningful campaign finance reform this year.

After we pass McCain-Feingold, we will need to turn to additional reforms in order to further improve our electoral process. I am working on legislation which would strengthen the Federal Election Commission. The proposal would do several things: Alter the Commission structure to remove the possibility of partisan gridlock; eliminate current restrictions on the Commission's ability to launch criminal investigations, and to impose timely, and effective penalties against violations of campaign law; and mandate electronic filing of all reports.

In addition, my proposal would expand the free air time provisions of McCain-Feingold in order to help level the playing field for challengers, and attack the single biggest factor in driving up campaign expenditures—expensive television costs. Finally, I am looking for methods to effectively enforce a shorter timeframe for the conduct of campaign-related activities.

Strengthening enforcement, expanding public access to information about candidates and their ideas, and reducing the length of the campaign season will, in my judgment, build upon the solid foundation which I hope we will create when we enact S. 25.

We have important work ahead, and often times there will be legitimate partisan, philosophical, and regional differences of opinion which should be voiced and acted upon. However, we have a shared interest, as Senators, but more importantly, as American citizens, in always acting to enhance the respect our citizens have for our great country and our democratic institutions, especially this body.

In that spirit, and with that commitment, I urge my colleagues to join in the cause of mending our broken campaign finance system. Let us create a new campaign finance system which instills public confidence rather than undermines it, and aids the governing process rather than hinders it.

President Grover Cleveland was right: "A public office is a public trust." The current money chase we all engage in is severely eroding that trust. We must act to change a campaign finance system that is broken, or continue to see good men and women from all walks of life and from all political persuasions broken by it.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas is recognized.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Will the Senator yield for a brief comment?

Mr. BROWNBACk. Just for a brief comment. I have a limited period of time.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SENATOR CLELAND ON HIS MAIDEN SPEECH

Mr. FEINGOLD. I thank the Senator. All I wanted to do is be the first to congratulate the Senator from Georgia on his first speech as a Member of this body. I can't tell you how delighted we all are to have the Senator from Georgia here. The Senator from Georgia ran a tough race. I know the Senator from Georgia has run other races before.

The people of Georgia know well that the Senator from Georgia did not come to this campaign finance reform issue in the last few weeks, or just after the revelations of the last election. The Senator from Georgia has been a leader in Georgia and in the country for years in authoring and considering and moving forward the issue of campaign finance reform. I can't think of anything that made me happier than when the Senator from Georgia said his first bill would be to cosponsor our bipartisan effort. On behalf of my colleagues and myself, it is a great moment in the Senate to have the Senator from Georgia join us and to hear his first speech.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I wonder if I may have 30 seconds.

Mr. BROWNBACk. Yes.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I echo what my colleague from Wisconsin has said. I believe, I say to the Senator from Georgia, that when we pass the reform bill in this Congress—and we must and we will—the words uttered in the Senator's first speech on the floor of the Senate will be remembered and will be part of a good piece of history in this country. I thank my colleague from Georgia, and I thank the people from Georgia for sending him here.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a brief comment? I ask unanimous consent that he retain his right to the floor and that the time consumed by me and by the two Senators preceding me not come out of the Senator's time.

Mr. BROWNBACk. I am happy to yield for a minute, if I could please, sir.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I join with others of my colleagues in complimenting the distinguished Senator from Georgia on his maiden speech.

It used to be, Mr. President, that when a new Senator came to this body, he waited several months before he spoke. Then when he made his maiden speech, other Senators who had been notified that he was going to make a speech would come to the floor and gather around him and listen to his speech. In those days we did not have the public address system. So Senators generally moved toward the desk of the Senator who was speaking so they could hear him better.

I have enjoyed listening to the distinguished Senator. He comes here today

as someone who is fresh off the campaign trail. I am sure that what he has had to say is something of importance, and I hope it will be read by our colleagues. He comes in the great tradition of Senators from Georgia. When I first came to Washington as a new Member of the Congress, we had Senator Walter George in the U.S. Senate, and Senator Richard Russell, who was my mentor in many ways, and it was I who introduced the resolution to name the old Senate Office Building in honor of Senator Richard Russell. Of course, there was also Sam Nunn, who followed in Senator Russell's footsteps.

I congratulate the distinguished Senator. He is a true American hero. I know that he will be an outstanding Member of this institution. I congratulate him.

I hope that all Senators will take note of what Senator CLELAND has said in his speech today. It will be well worth their time to read that speech.

I thank him.

And I thank the distinguished Senator from Kansas.

Mr. BROWNBACk addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. BROWNBACk. Mr. President, I want to recognize and congratulate the Senator from Georgia for joining the body. I am joining him on his first maiden speech.

I also thank the Senator from West Virginia for educating and sharing with us some of the culture and the history of the U.S. Senate, which I think is always beneficial for us to have and to be able to share with the American people the history, the ability, and the nature of this body as it was set up by the Founding Fathers and which has been maintained with most of its integrity since that time and age of what they set forward.

I think it is always positive for us to know the history and the nature and why we serve and how we should serve.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator for his very kind and overly charitable remarks.

Mr. BROWNBACk. They are not overly charitable at all.

(The remarks of Mr. BROWNBACk pertaining to the introduction of S. 471 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. GRAHAM addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANTORUM). The Senator from Florida.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, first, I wish to add to the remarks that have been made this afternoon in recognition of the first speech given as a Member of the U.S. Senate by our new colleague, the Senator from Georgia. He has represented this Nation with great distinction throughout his life, and we are gratified that he has now joined us in the Senate. I am confident that the remarks he made a few minutes ago will be illustrative of the contributions he will make throughout his Senate ca-

reer. I am proud to call him a friend and colleague.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Ms. Delia Lasanta, a fellow in our office, be allowed privileges of the floor during consideration of the legislation that I will be introducing this afternoon with my friend and colleague, the Senator from Idaho [Mr. CRAIG].

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. GRAHAM and Mr. CRAIG pertaining to the introduction of S. 472 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

COMMUNICATIONS DECENCY ACT

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise today to join with a number of my colleagues to say there was a very important argument in the Supreme Court today over the constitutionality of the Communications Decency Act, which we passed last year. You will recall that we passed a bill to make it difficult to communicate pornography to children. The day it was passed and signed, the American Civil Liberties Union jumped in to say it was unconstitutional. I'm sorry, but I think the ACLU has it all wrong. I was very pleased to be one of a group of Senators, including the occupant of the Chair, who signed a brief in support of Congress' effort to impose reasonable regulations and restrictions to prevent the worst form of pornography from reaching our children.

Congress can regulate speech when there is a compelling reason. That has been clear. That has been held constitutional in many instances, and I suggest that there is no more compelling need than to protect our children and future generations from exposure to explicit pornographic pictures and messages, and from the people who send them.

The government, both the Federal Government and State and local governments, have engaged in efforts to regulate pornography. We regulate media available to children such as the sale of books and magazines, the viewing and sale of films, the use of telephone services to communicate adult messages, and the broadcast media. So, this has been done and it has been done for a very good and I believe a very compelling reason. The standard put forth in the Communications Decency Act is even more stringent than that, in terms of the limitations of it. The constraints are more severely limited than the constraints on the broadcast media. We have tightened up the definitions and made the ban much narrower.

The Internet is clearly the latest means of communications. Any of us